

December 2004

# MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

## Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Management Tools Are Needed to Enhance DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Capabilities



G A O

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Highlights of [GAO-05-70](#), a report to congressional committees

## Why GAO Did This Study

Because future threats the nation may face are uncertain, and with many competing demands on its resources, the Department of Defense (DOD) has begun to transform its military capabilities, which will involve not only the acquisition of new weapon systems but also how the armed forces think, train, and fight. In 2003, DOD estimated \$263 billion would be allocated from fiscal year 2004 through 2009 for transformation efforts. In this report GAO (1) describes DOD's strategy to transform joint military capabilities; (2) assesses the extent to which DOD has established clear leadership, accountability, and a mechanism to integrate transformation efforts; and (3) assesses the extent to which DOD's framework incorporates results-oriented management tools to guide transformation efforts.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO makes recommendations designed to establish clear leadership, accountability, and a more results-oriented management framework to guide DOD's transformation of military capabilities. In oral comments, the Office of Force Transformation disagreed with these recommendations but did not address the weaknesses described in this report or provide convincing evidence to show the recommendations are not warranted. Therefore, GAO continues to believe the recommendations are appropriate.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-70](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-70).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Janet St. Laurent, (202) 512-4402.

# MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

## Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Management Tools Are Needed to Enhance DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Capabilities

### What GAO Found

DOD has taken positive steps to design and implement a complex strategy to transform U.S. military capabilities, but it has not established clear leadership and accountability or fully adopted results-oriented management tools to help guide and successfully implement this approach. The responsibility for transforming military capabilities is currently spread among various DOD organizations, with no one person or entity having the overarching and ongoing leadership responsibilities or the accountability for achieving transformation results. In addition, although DOD established an informal crosscutting group that meets occasionally to discuss transformation issues, this group has no charter, formal responsibilities, or authority to direct changes. GAO has previously reported that key practices for successful transformation include leadership that sets the direction of transformation and assigns accountability for results, and the use of crosscutting implementation teams, which can provide the day-to-day management needed for success. In recent testimony on DOD's business transformation, we underscored the importance of these elements and stated that DOD has not routinely assigned accountability for performance to specific organizations or individuals who have sufficient authority to accomplish goals. DOD officials believe that a single organization accountable for transformation results and a formal implementation team are not necessary because existing informal mechanisms involve key organizations that can individually implement needed changes, and an annual assessment of transformation roadmaps is prepared for the Secretary of Defense, who can direct the transformation efforts of each organization. However, in the absence of clear leadership, accountability, and a formal implementation mechanism, DOD may have difficulty resolving differences among competing priorities, directing resources to the highest priorities, and ensuring progress should changes in senior personnel occur. In addition, informal mechanisms are not sufficient to provide transparency to the process or assurance to Congress that DOD is allocating resources to address needed improvements rather than desired improvements.

While DOD's strategy to transform military capabilities is a good first step, DOD has not fully developed results-oriented management tools that can help managers effectively implement and manage major efforts, and focus on achieving results. Specifically, DOD has not revised its initial transformation goals, set in 2001, to reflect new joint concepts—thus, DOD lacks a foundation for developing other tools such as performance goals and measures and linking specific resources needed to achieve each goal. DOD faces challenges in developing these tools because the joint concepts are being developed concurrently with its plans to acquire new capabilities. But without these results-oriented tools, it will be difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which its transformation efforts are achieving desired results, to measure its overall progress, or to provide transparency for how billions of dollars in planned investments are being applied.

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## Abbreviations

|      |  |
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| DOD  | Department of Defense                    |
| OUSD | Office of the Under Secretary of Defense |
| TPG  | <i>Transformation Planning Guidance</i>  |

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**United States Government Accountability Office**  
**Washington, DC 20548**

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December 17, 2004

The Honorable John W. Warner  
Chairman  
The Honorable Carl Levin  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate

The Honorable Jim Saxton  
Chairman  
The Honorable Martin T. Meehan  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Terrorism,  
Unconventional Threats and Capabilities  
Committee on Armed Services  
House of Representatives

Because of the uncertainties associated with the future threats the nation may face, and with many competing demands on its resources, the Department of Defense (DOD) has embarked on a major effort to transform its business processes, human capital, and military capabilities. The transformation of military capabilities, which is the focus of this report, will involve not only the acquisition of new weapon systems, but also how the armed forces think, train, and fight. Transformation is also seen as a process intended to provide continuous improvements to military capabilities. In the words of the Secretary of Defense "...DOD is building a culture of continual transformation, so that our armed forces are always several steps ahead of any potential adversaries." One of the fundamental objectives of transformation is to enhance joint operations—the coordinated use of all military forces that share information across traditional service boundaries and levels of command.

This transformation effort will require a significant investment of resources at a time when the nation faces a serious fiscal imbalance and many competing demands. In 2003, DOD reported that it planned to spend about \$263 billion for transformation from fiscal year 2004 through 2009. Concurrently, DOD must also balance resource demands for ongoing military operations around the world and maintain existing weapon systems.

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Because of the importance of successfully adapting U.S. military capabilities to address changing threats and the significant investments that this will require, we assessed the management framework DOD has established to guide its transformation efforts. Specifically, in this report we (1) describe DOD's strategy to transform joint military capabilities; (2) assess the extent to which DOD has clearly established leadership, accountability for achieving transformation results, and a mechanism to integrate transformation efforts; and (3) assess the extent to which DOD is using results-oriented management tools to guide implementation of its transformation strategy. We prepared this report at our own initiative, and are providing a copy to you because of your oversight of defense issues.

To describe DOD's strategy to transform military capabilities, we reviewed the department's *Transformation Planning Guidance* and plans for implementing major parts of the strategy. We corroborated and clarified our understanding of how DOD intends to implement its strategy with appropriate DOD officials. To assess the extent to which DOD has clearly established leadership, accountability for achieving transformation results, and a mechanism to integrate transformation efforts, we examined DOD instructions governing the roles and responsibilities of various defense organizations and reviewed relevant policy guidance and documents. We also identified similar crosscutting initiatives within DOD and examined how it established the authority and accountability for those initiatives. We compared this information to selected key practices consistently found to be at the center of successful mergers and organizational transformations and discussed the results with relevant DOD officials. To assess the extent to which DOD is using results-oriented management tools to guide transformation efforts, we compared DOD's current management framework with management principles embodied by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and discussed our results with appropriate DOD officials. We assessed the reliability of the cost data we obtained from DOD reports by corroborating the data with knowledgeable agency officials and determined that it was sufficiently reliable for our purposes. See appendix I for a more complete description of our scope and methodology. We conducted our work between May 2003 and October 2004 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

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## Results in Brief

DOD has taken positive steps to design and implement a complex strategy to transform U.S. military capabilities. The foundation of the strategy is joint concepts, which are intended to depict how U.S. military forces will be integrated to conduct future operations. For example, DOD is

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developing a joint concept called force application that will describe how the Joint Force Commander will integrate and rapidly maneuver forces across the range of military operations. DOD plans to develop and refine these concepts through experimentation efforts led by the Joint Forces Command. These concepts are intended to evolve as DOD's transformation efforts progress. As DOD defines and develops these joint concepts, it has also required each military department and the Joint Forces Command to prepare individual plans (called roadmaps) to acquire the capabilities to implement these new joint concepts. The roadmaps are prepared annually and reflect ongoing initiatives, such as the Army's Future Combat System, and also recognize that science and technology are expected to yield new capabilities in the future. The strategy also calls for an annual assessment of the progress made in implementing transformation of military capabilities, the results of which are intended to influence future defense guidance and, ultimately, investment decisions.

Although the Secretary of Defense has assigned responsibility for managing key aspects of transformation, DOD has not established clear leadership and accountability for achieving transformation results, nor has it established a formal mechanism to coordinate and integrate the various transformation efforts within the department. As we have previously reported, key practices for successful transformation include leadership that sets the direction of transformation, assigns accountability for results, and is supported by crosscutting implementation teams, which, in turn, can provide the focused, day-to-day management needed for success.<sup>1</sup> In recent testimony on DOD's business transformation, we underscored the importance of these elements and stated that DOD has not routinely assigned accountability for performance to specific organizations or individuals who have sufficient authority to accomplish goals.<sup>2</sup> Although the Secretary of Defense has provided the vision for transformation and set the tone for accomplishing it, the responsibility for various parts of the transformation strategy for military capabilities is spread among several organizations, including the Office of Force Transformation, the Joint Staff, each of the services, and the Joint Forces Command; and no single individual or organization has been given the overarching leadership

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<sup>1</sup> GAO, *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, [GAO-03-669](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> GAO, *Department of Defense: Further Actions Needed to Establish and Implement a Framework for Successful Financial and Business Management Transformation*, [GAO-04-551T](#) (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 23, 2004).



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responsibilities, authority, or the accountability for achieving transformation results. In addition, although DOD has established an informal crosscutting group that meets occasionally to discuss transformation issues, this group has no formal charter, meets on an irregular basis, and has no directive authority. DOD officials stated that they believe that the current assignment of responsibilities among various department organizations is adequate and that a formal crosscutting group is not needed because existing informal mechanisms involve key organizations that can implement needed changes, and the annual assessment of the progress made in transformation efforts is prepared for the Secretary of Defense, who can direct the transformation efforts of each military department. However, in the absence of clear leadership, accountability, and a formal implementation mechanism, DOD may have difficulty in resolving differences among competing priorities, directing resources to the highest priorities, and ensuring progress if changes in senior personnel occur. In addition, informal mechanisms are not sufficient to provide transparency to the process or provide Congress with assurance that DOD is allocating resources to address needed improvements rather than desired improvements.

While the strategy designed by DOD to transform military capabilities is a good first step toward establishing a framework to guide and monitor the results of its transformation efforts, DOD has not fully developed results-oriented management tools that provide a means to set clear and specific goals and measure progress in achieving them. For example, DOD initially established six long-term goals for transformation in the 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, and it subsequently articulated additional transformation goals in other department documents. DOD has not, however, revised these goals to reflect the new joint concepts, which, as previously discussed, are now intended to be the foundation of the transformation strategy. Without clear and consistent long-term goals grounded in the joint concepts, DOD lacks a foundation for developing other important tools such as performance goals and measures, and it is limited in its ability to link resource needs to specific goals. DOD faces challenges in developing these management tools because of the inherently concurrent nature of the transformation process—the joint concepts are being defined and developed at the same time the services and the Joint Forces Command are developing their plans to acquire new capabilities. But without tools such as clear long-term goals, performance goals and measures, and specific resource requirements that are linked to these goals, it will be difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which its transformation efforts are achieving desired results, measure its overall

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progress, or provide transparency for how billions of dollars in planned investments are being applied.

We are recommending that the Secretary of Defense establish clear leadership and accountability for achieving the transformation of military capabilities, establish a formal group to integrate departmentwide efforts, and direct this group and the Joint Forces Command to more fully incorporate results-oriented management tools to help DOD guide the transformation efforts and report on results achieved. In official oral comments on a draft of this report provided by the Office of Force Transformation, DOD officials generally disagreed with our recommendations. In general, their comments indicated that they believe the current transformation leadership, organizational structures, strategy, and oversight mechanisms are adequate and appropriate; therefore the recommendations we make in this report are unwarranted. DOD's comments did not, however, address the weaknesses we describe in the report, and the additional points they raised did not provide convincing evidence that our recommendations were unnecessary. Accordingly, we continue to believe our recommendations, if implemented, could enhance the department's efforts to transform military capabilities and provide Congress with greater visibility over how billions of dollars are being applied to achieve this goal. DOD's comments and our evaluation are discussed in detail at the end of this report.

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## Background

DOD defines transformation as “a process that shapes the changing nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of concepts, capabilities, people, and organizations that exploit our nation's advantages and protect against our asymmetric vulnerabilities.”<sup>3</sup> It describes the outcome of transformation as “fundamentally joint, network-centric, distributed forces capable of rapid decision superiority and massed effects across the battlespace”—that is, transformation should result in maximum collaboration among the services and between levels of command, all of them having access to the same, integrated computer network, geographically dispersed but effectively interconnected, to enable quick, real-time decision making and achieve widespread effects. DOD's transformation efforts are not limited to military capabilities; DOD is also undertaking efforts to transform its business practices, human

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<sup>3</sup> *Transformation Planning Guidance*, Washington, D.C.: April 2003.

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capital,<sup>4</sup> and its relationships with interagency and multinational partners. The focus of this report is on DOD's efforts to transform military capabilities to meet the changing and uncertain nature of future threats.

The transformation of joint military capabilities began with DOD's 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, a congressionally mandated but DOD-led study, which concluded that transformation of U.S. forces is needed to extend America's military advantages into the future. DOD published its strategy for transforming military capabilities in the April 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance* (TPG). The TPG stated that new joint concepts are needed to describe how U.S. forces will conduct operations in the next 15 to 20 years and that changes in new weapons systems, organizations, doctrine, training, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities will be needed to provide these capabilities. According to a recent DOD report,<sup>5</sup> the performance of U.S. forces in the successful conduct of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom has provided a glimpse of the future potential of emerging concepts, such as sharing information among dispersed forces and using existing weapon systems in new ways. In fact, the Deputy Commander, Joint Forces Command, testified in February 2004 that these operations sharpened DOD's transformation focus by showing the effectiveness of integrating forces, such as merging special operations and conventional forces.

Implementations of large-scale changes, such as transformations, are not simple endeavors and require concentrated efforts to accomplish goals. Experience shows that successful changes can take years to accomplish and, in the federal government, can be difficult to sustain given frequent turnover in leadership. We have reported that DOD's force transformation will also require cultural changes and business process reengineering that will take years to accomplish.<sup>6</sup>

In our past work, we have reported on the advantages of using results-oriented management tools to help organizations successfully manage major efforts such as transformation. Our work on transforming organizations highlighted the need for leadership to drive the

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<sup>4</sup> GAO, *Human Capital: Building on DOD's Reform Effort to Foster Governmentwide Improvements*, [GAO-03-851T](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 4, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> *Military Transformation: A Strategic Approach*, Office of Force Transformation, (Washington, D.C.: 2003).

<sup>6</sup> [GAO-03-669](#).

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transformation with integrated strategic goals, dedicating a crosscutting team to implement the strategy, and the use of performance management principles to assign responsibility and ensure accountability for the change.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, we have reported that management principles (or tools) embodied by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 provide agencies with a framework to effectively implement and manage programs and shift the management focus from measuring the program activities and processes to measuring outcomes.<sup>8</sup> Such a shift in focus is especially important for efforts such as the transformation of military capabilities, which will involve billions of dollars in spending.

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## DOD's Transformation Strategy Is Evolving and Involves Complex and Concurrent Components

DOD has designed a complex strategy focused on developing and fielding improved joint military capabilities and, in fiscal year 2003, it began to implement this strategy for the first time. The foundation of DOD's strategy is the joint concepts, which are intended to depict how U.S. military forces will be integrated to conduct future operations. The strategy also requires the Joint Forces Command and each military department to prepare roadmaps—that is, implementation plans—for developing and acquiring the capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts. The roadmaps reflect some programs that are ongoing, such as the Army's Future Combat System, and also recognize that science and technology are expected to yield new capabilities in the future. DOD also performs an annual assessment of the roadmaps, the results of which are intended to influence future defense guidance and, ultimately, investment decisions.

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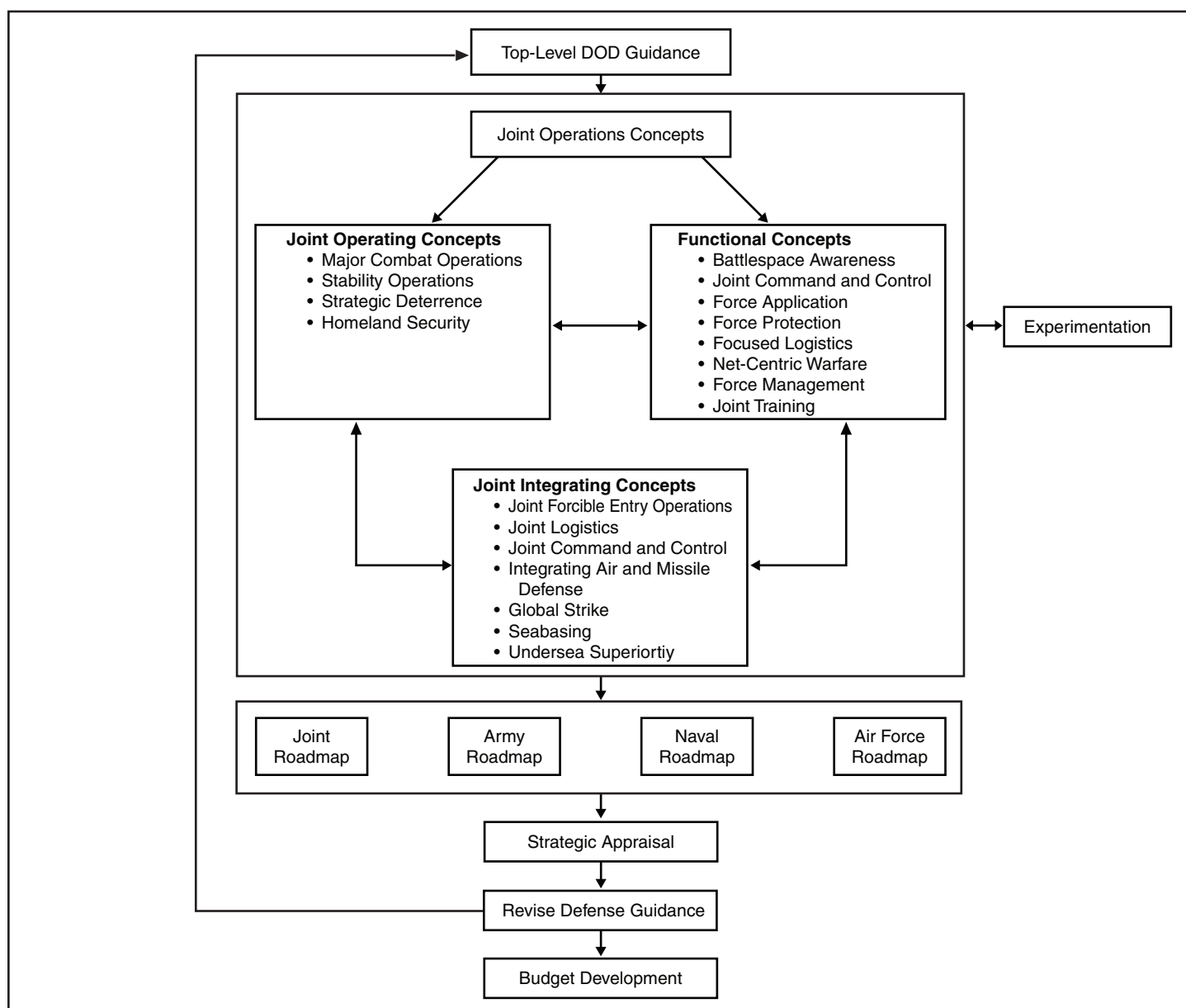
<sup>7</sup> [GAO-03-669](#).

<sup>8</sup> Congress enacted this legislation to provide for, among other things, the establishment of strategic planning and performance measurement in the federal government. See Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-62 (1993).

## Joint Transformation Strategy Includes Several Complex Components

DOD has developed a complex strategy to transform joint military capabilities that involves several complex components. Figure 1 provides a general portrayal of the relationship between these components. Fiscal year 2003 was the first year that DOD implemented this overall strategy.

**Figure 1: Components of DOD's Strategy for Transforming Military Capabilities**



Source: GAO analysis of DOD information.

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As illustrated in figure 1, the strategy is based on general defense guidance reflected in documents such as the *National Military Strategy* and the *Quadrennial Defense Review*. From this general guidance, DOD is developing a “family” of joint operating, functional, and integrating concepts, which collectively depict how transformed forces will operate in the future. DOD intends to continually develop and evolve each of these joint concepts over the next several years through experimentation conducted by each service and the Joint Forces Command. Each military department and the Joint Forces Command also prepare annual roadmaps, which are intended to provide more specific information on plans to acquire the capabilities to achieve the joint concepts. The strategy also calls for the Director, Office of Force Transformation,<sup>9</sup> to conduct an annual evaluation of the progress made in achieving transformation goals (called a strategic assessment) by reviewing the annual roadmaps. DOD officials stated that the results of the strategic assessment are incorporated into defense guidance that provides direction for budget development. We discuss each of these components in more detail below.

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## Joint Concepts Are Intended to Provide a Foundation for Transformation

DOD has reported that the key to its transformation strategy is a family of joint concepts, which includes an overarching vision (articulated in the Joint Operations Concepts) and interrelated operating, functional, and integrating concepts. DOD created the Joint Operations Concepts to articulate the overarching description of how the military will conduct all types of joint operations in the next 15 to 20 years. It focuses more on how the United States can defeat a broad array of capabilities that any adversary may employ rather than who the adversaries are and where they may engage U.S. forces or interests. The Secretary of Defense signed the Joint Operations Concepts in November 2003.

The Joint Operations Concepts calls for the creation of subordinate Joint Operating Concepts (hereinafter called operating concepts) that collectively describe how the military will operate across the range of military operations. According to a Joint Staff official, although DOD has drafted the four operating concepts, as of October 2004, the Secretary of Defense had not approved them. These four Joint Operating Concepts and a general description of each are as follows:

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<sup>9</sup> The Director, Office of Force Transformation, advises the Secretary of Defense on transformation issues.

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- **Major Combat Operations** – conduct large-scale military actions.
  - **Stability Operations** – conducted before, during, and after major combat operations to provide security, initial humanitarian assistance, limited governance, restoration of essential public services, and other reconstruction assistance.
  - **Strategic Deterrence** – discourage aggression or any form of coercion against the United States or its interests and alter a nation's or group's will and ability to attack the homeland, U.S. allies, or development of democracies throughout the world.
  - **Homeland Security** – detect, deter, prevent, and defeat attacks against the homeland to provide military forces in support of civilian authority, and plan for emergencies.

Complementing the four operating concepts are eight functional concepts. These functional concepts as described in DOD documents are:

- **Command and Control** – describes how joint forces will collaborate, communicate, and implement commanders' decisions while conducting operations as described in the operating concepts.
- **Force Application** – describes how the Joint Force Commander will integrate and rapidly maneuver forces to engage adversaries and defeat them across the range of military operations outlined collectively in the operating concepts.
- **Battlespace Awareness** – describes the information about an operational environment—including status of friendly, adversary, and nonaligned forces and the impacts of physical, cultural, social, political, and economic factors on military operations—and how the Joint Force Commander can use this information to plan operations.
- **Force Protection** – describes how the joint force will use active and passive capabilities to protect personnel, physical assets, and information to prevent adversaries from restricting or preventing U.S. forces from conducting operations as described in the operating concepts.
- **Focused Logistics** – describes how DOD will provide the Joint Force Commander with equipment and other support on time for simultaneous operations conducted over geographically dispersed areas.

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- **Network-Centric Warfare** – currently in development.
  - **Force Management** – currently in development.
  - **Joint Training** – currently in development.

Functional concepts are intended, collectively, to describe the capabilities and attributes that will be needed to implement the operating concepts. As forces shift from one type of operation to another, such as from stability operations to major combat operations, the functional capabilities they need may change as well. For example, a stability operation may require nonlethal force application capabilities, but if the operation shifts to major combat, then lethal capabilities may be emphasized. DOD approved the battlespace awareness, joint command and control, force application, force protection, and focused logistics concepts in February 2004. According to a Joint Staff official, as of October 2004, the other three were in development.

The integrating concepts, which crosscut through the operating and functional concepts, have the narrowest focus of all the concepts. As of October 2004, DOD had begun drafting seven integrating concepts, although none were completed and more may be added. The seven concepts being drafted are

- Joint Command and Control,
- Joint Logistics,
- Joint Forcible Entry Operations,
- Integrating Air and Missile Defense,
- Global Strike,
- Seabasing, and
- Undersea Superiority.

The integrating concepts describe how the capabilities derived from the joint and functional concepts are meant to work together. For example, according to Office of Force Transformation and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (hereafter referred to as OUSD Policy) officials, the seabasing concept may describe how the capabilities derived from the focused logistics functional concept would be applied in a major combat operation. The March 2004 defense guidance directed that the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, develop a comprehensive, prioritized list of integrating concepts required to support the operating concepts before fiscal year 2005 and assign them to specific DOD components for development. This guidance also directs that undersea superiority



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operations, seabasing operations, and global strike operations be developed prior to the next *Quadrennial Defense Review*. We did not evaluate the status of these concepts during our review.

DOD plans to use experimentation<sup>10</sup> to help define and develop each concept and identify the specific capabilities needed to implement them. The Joint Forces Command is responsible for joint experimentation on the concepts and integrating results from other combatant commanders' experiments. Based on the results, the Joint Forces Command will recommend modifications to existing joint concepts as well as recommend changes needed in doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities to achieve the capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts. According to the Joint Forces Command's experimentation plan, these recommendations should help DOD senior leadership make informed decisions about future investments. Experimentation is ongoing—the Joint Forces Command's experimentation plan outlines the Command's approach from fiscal year 2004 through 2011, and it presents in detail events scheduled throughout fiscal years 2004 and 2005.

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## Roadmaps Are Implementation Plans to Develop and Acquire Capabilities for Joint Concepts

The Office of Force Transformation is responsible for managing the roadmap process. The 2003 transformation roadmaps were the first ones to be prepared under DOD's transformation strategy, and they were submitted in November 2003 to the Office of Force Transformation for review. They are intended to be implementation plans outlining the concrete steps DOD must take to develop and acquire the capabilities necessary for implementing the joint concepts. Specifically, the *Transformation Planning Guidance* requires the roadmaps to include information such as

- when and how desired capabilities will be fielded;
- which critical capabilities from other services and agencies are required for success;
- changes to the organizational structure, operating concepts, doctrine, and skill sets of personnel;
- initiatives intended to improve interoperability;

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<sup>10</sup> Experimentation uses various types of assessments to develop, refine, and validate joint concepts and their associated capabilities. These activities vary in scale but are designed to identify areas to explore (that is, develop hypotheses) and then use simulated or live experiments to confirm, refute, or modify the ideas.

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- measures intended to assess DOD's six transformational goals identified in the 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review* and joint operating concepts; and
  - funding information that includes appropriation breakouts through the *Future Years Defense Program*<sup>11</sup> for the desired capabilities.

The military department roadmaps (Army, Naval,<sup>12</sup> and Air Force) are developed by the services. They provide a broad overview of the service capabilities under development to support the joint concepts. As the concepts develop over time and specify more precisely what capabilities are required, the roadmaps can, in turn, specify more precisely how those capabilities will be acquired. The roadmaps also reflect some ongoing programs, such as the Army's Future Combat System and the Air Force's Space-Based Radar, and recognize that science and technology investments are expected to yield new capabilities. The Joint Forces Command is responsible for developing the joint roadmap using input from the combat support defense agencies.<sup>13</sup> The purpose of the joint roadmap is to document planned activities to achieve transformational improvements in joint capabilities, such as joint command and control and joint intelligence, and to facilitate the coordination of transformational activities across DOD.

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## Strategic Appraisal Designed to Assess Transformation Progress

The TPG requires the Office of Force Transformation to conduct an annual strategic appraisal to assist the Secretary of Defense in evaluating progress in implementing transformation. The TPG requires that the strategic appraisal process include an evaluation of transformation progress using specific measures; that barriers to transformation be identified; and that recommendations are developed to improve transformation for the next TPG or other defense guidance. That guidance, in turn, is intended to provide the services with instructions for budget development.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Future Years Defense Program* is a DOD centralized report that provides information on DOD's current and planned outyear budget requests.

<sup>12</sup> The Naval Transformation Roadmap represents the Navy and Marine Corps plan.

<sup>13</sup> Defense Agencies that are assigned wartime support missions are designated as Combat Support Agencies and include agencies such as the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Defense Information Systems Agency, the Defense Logistics Agency, and the National Security Agency.

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According to Office of Force Transformation and OUSD Policy officials, the Office of Force Transformation conducted its first strategic appraisal of the roadmaps between December 2003 and February 2004, the results of which were briefed to the Secretary of Defense in April 2004. According to Office of Force Transformation officials, information provided from the strategic appraisal was incorporated into 2004 defense guidance issued by the Secretary of Defense. For example, the 2004 defense guidance required the Director, Defense Research and Engineering, to prepare a roadmap for the development of directed-energy capabilities through 2020. Other results, according to Office of Force Transformation and OUSD Policy officials, were incorporated into informal guidance that the Office of Force Transformation provided to the services and the Joint Forces Command for updating the roadmaps that were due to be submitted in July 2004. Neither the strategic appraisal's results nor the defense guidance is published outside DOD. According to these officials, the 2004 roadmaps were submitted for review in July 2004, and the second strategic appraisal process is now under way.

According to the TPG, the strategic appraisal process should include input from the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation, which evaluates the transformational value of the service budget requests in light of the services' roadmaps. Although this evaluation was not completed in the first strategic appraisal, officials from this office said that they intend to require the services to show how their proposed budgets support their roadmaps, and the services' input will become the basis for the evaluation. Furthermore, officials said that in cases where the services' budget requests deviate from resource requirements articulated in each roadmap, the services are required to show how any increases in funding for one program will be offset by decreases in other areas.

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## DOD's Transformation Strategy Is Intended to Link to the Acquisition Process

The transformation strategy is designed to link with the acquisition process through the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System. This system is DOD's capabilities-based process intended to identify, evaluate, and prioritize capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts. According to a Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction,<sup>14</sup> this process is complex but includes the following basic steps. In the first step, a variety of defense organizations, including the military services and

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<sup>14</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3170.01D: *Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System*. March 12, 2004.

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the combatant commands, identifies, analyzes, and prioritizes the gaps between current capabilities and those needed to implement the joint concepts. Second, these same organizations develop solutions to address these gaps through a combination of materiel changes (that is, developing and buying new weapon systems) and nonmateriel changes (that is, changes in doctrine, organizations, training, leadership, personnel, and facilities). Finally, several review boards within the Joint Requirements Oversight Council<sup>15</sup> review the recommended solutions. Approved solutions are then funded as part of DOD's budget process. For example, the approved solution to providing capability X for implementing the force application functional concept may be to develop and buy a new weapon system. This new weapon system then becomes an acquisition requirement that is funded as part of DOD's budget process.

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## Overall Transformation Leadership, Accountability, and Integrating Mechanism Have Not Been Established

Although the Secretary of Defense has taken some positive steps to begin the transformation of military capabilities and assigned responsibility for various components of this effort, DOD has not established clear leadership and accountability for achieving transformation results, nor has it established a formal mechanism to coordinate and integrate the various transformation efforts within the department. As we have reported, key practices and implementation steps for a successful transformation include leadership that sets the direction of transformation, assigns accountability for results, and is supported by crosscutting implementation teams, which, in turn, can provide the focused, day-to-day management needed for success.<sup>16</sup> According to OUSD Policy and Office of Force Transformation officials, an informal group consisting of representatives from key organizations meets periodically to discuss transformation issues. But this group has no official charter designating specific responsibilities; it prepares no minutes of its proceedings, and it has no directive authority to implement the decisions it makes. Without formally designating responsibility and accountability for results, sustaining transformation over the long term, choosing among competing demands for scarce resources, and resolving differences in priorities

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<sup>15</sup> The Joint Requirements Oversight Council is an advisory council to assist the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in identifying and assessing the priority of joint military capabilities to meet the national military and defense strategies. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 5123.01B: *Charter of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council*. April 15, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> [GAO-03-669](#).

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between various DOD organizations may be difficult and could impede DOD's ability to transform in an efficient and timely manner.

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**Key Practices for  
Successful Transformation  
Include Clear Leadership,  
Accountability, and  
Crosscutting  
Implementation Team**

We reported in 2003 that key practices and implementation steps for successful transformations include clear leadership and accountability, and that a dedicated implementation team should be responsible for the transformation's day-to-day management, which is important to ensuring that various initiatives are integrated.<sup>17</sup> Such an implementation team, vested with the necessary authority, would ensure that transformation receives the focused, full-time attention necessary to be sustained and effective by establishing clearly defined roles and responsibilities, helping to reach agreement on work priorities, and keeping efforts coordinated. We recently emphasized the importance of these elements in our March 2004 testimony on DOD's business transformation efforts before the Senate Committee on Armed Services.<sup>18</sup> In that testimony, the Comptroller General stated that, given the importance of DOD's business transformation effort, it is imperative that it receives the sustained leadership needed to improve DOD's business operations over a number of years and various administrations. Our testimony highlighted that DOD has not routinely assigned accountability for performance to specific organizations or individuals who have sufficient authority to accomplish goals. While DOD's leadership has demonstrated the commitment to reforming the department, the day-to-day demands placed on the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and others make it difficult for these leaders to maintain the oversight, focus, and momentum needed to resolve the weaknesses in DOD's business operations. The lack of adequate transparency and appropriate accountability across all of DOD's major business areas results in billions of dollars in annual wasted resources in a time of increasing fiscal constraint. As a result, DOD does not have timely, reliable information for management to use in making informed decisions. The Comptroller General also stated that one way to ensure sustained leadership over DOD's business transformation efforts would be to create a position for a chief operating officer or chief management official who would serve as the Principal Under Secretary of Defense for Management.

In some cases, DOD has taken steps to establish clear accountability and authority for other significant transformation efforts. For example, DOD

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<sup>17</sup> [GAO-03-669](#).

<sup>18</sup> [GAO-04-551T](#).

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has designated the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness with overall responsibility for training transformation and named the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Readiness as Executive Agent.<sup>19</sup> Supporting the Executive Agent are oversight and implementation groups whose members crosscut DOD, that is, the Joint Staff, the military services, and representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense that include Program Analysis and Evaluation; Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; Comptroller; and Policy. The implementation group is responsible for providing overall daily management, while the oversight groups are to resolve issues, manage funding, and ensure collaboration across DOD.

For efforts related to the transformation of military capabilities, the Joint Forces Command has recognized the importance of using crosscutting groups and assigning overall responsibility and accountability for results. First, the Command developed an Integrated Interoperability Plan that recommends a crosscutting governance group be established to implement and monitor the achievement of interoperability objectives, which are key to transformation. According to the plan, the purpose of the crosscutting group would be to provide oversight and coordination of capability development, synchronizing all key DOD processes, and ensuring “holistic” implementation of the requirements/acquisition process, from conception to fielding. The plan recommended that this group be led by a senior DOD official and include participation from the Joint Staff, Joint Forces Command, Special Operations Command, Strategic Command, services, and defense agencies to serve as the senior resolution body for capability and interoperability issues cutting across DOD components, and to approve joint capability and interoperability measures. According to OUSD Policy and Office of Force Transformation officials, however, this group has not been established because it was believed to be a layer of bureaucracy that was not needed. Second, the Joint Roadmap<sup>20</sup> prepared by the Joint Forces Command concluded that “[f]ailure to successfully integrate the emerging ... systems will imperil the transformation of DOD military capabilities.” The roadmap recommended that a coordination

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<sup>19</sup> DOD defines “Executive Agent” as the Head of a DOD Component to whom the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense has assigned specific responsibilities, functions and authorities to provide support...for designated activities that involve two or more DOD Components. DOD Directive 5101.1, DOD Executive Agent, Sec. 3.1, September 3, 2002.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, *Joint Transformation Roadmap* (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 21, 2004).

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group be established to help identify synergies between activities and to direct limited resources where they would be the most beneficial. The roadmap also recommended that four DOD organizations work together to ensure that science and technology efforts will be linked to developing the new joint concepts. The Joint Forces Command official we spoke with indicated that they were unaware of any actions taken to respond to these recommendations.

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**Clear Leadership and Accountability for Transformation of Military Capabilities Have Not Been Established**

As table 1 shows, there are many DOD organizations tasked with specific responsibilities for implementing parts of the transformation strategy, but none of these organizations have been given the leadership responsibilities or the overarching authority and accountability for achieving transformation results. According to Office of Force Transformation and OUSD Policy officials, the Secretary of Defense is ultimately responsible and accountable for all DOD activities, and therefore is inherently responsible and accountable for the successful transformation of military capabilities. We believe that while DOD leadership has demonstrated the commitment to transforming military capabilities, as previously stated, the day-to-day demands placed on the Secretary make it difficult for him to personally maintain the oversight, focus, and momentum needed to sustain transformation efforts.

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**Table 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Key Offices**

| Organization   | Responsibilities   |
|--|--|
| Secretary of Defense   | Sets transformation policies and objectives  |
| Chairman of the Joint Chiefs   | Oversees joint concept development and validates joint requirements  |
| Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy                          | Prepares <i>Transformation Planning Guidance</i> and other defense guidance  |
| Office of Force Transformation   | Monitors and evaluates implementation of the transformation strategy; advises the Secretary of Defense; assesses the roadmaps during the strategic appraisal process |
| Office of the Secretary of Defense for Program Analysis and Evaluation | Analyzes service budgets to see that initiatives in transformation roadmaps are funded in budget requests  |
| Joint Forces Command (and other combatant commands)                    | Conduct joint concept development and experimentation  |
| Military services  | Build plans (called roadmaps) and budgets to achieve transformational capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts  |

Source: GAO analysis of DOD guidance.

Two organizations (Office of Force Transformation and the Joint Forces Command) have central roles in the transformation strategy but no overarching authority or accountability for achieving transformation results. First, the Director, Office of Force Transformation, is to advise the Secretary of Defense, monitor and evaluate the transformation strategy, and assess the roadmaps during the strategic appraisal process. The Director does not have the overall authority, responsibility, and accountability for implementing DOD's transformation strategy. In fact, the Director testified before Congress that he "is a catalyst for" and "encourages" but does not "direct" transformation.<sup>21</sup> Although the Office of Force Transformation was created in November 2001, its charter, as of September 2004, had not been approved. Second, as previously discussed, the Joint Forces Command is responsible for annually preparing the joint roadmap. However, Joint Forces Command officials told us the Command does not have the overall authority and responsibility to implement the

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<sup>21</sup> *Hearings on Defense Transformation Before the House Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities*, 108th Cong. 5,33 (2004) (statement of Arthur Cebrowski, Director, Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense).



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roadmap because the Command does not have the authority to direct the services' and defense agencies' programs described in the roadmap.

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### Formal Implementation Team Has Not Been Established to Integrate Transformation Efforts

According to OUSD Policy and Office of Force Transformation officials, DOD established an informal crosscutting group that meets occasionally to discuss transformation issues. But, according to these officials, it has no charter designating specific responsibilities for achieving transformation goals, assessing transformation performance measures, or linking resources to goals. In addition, the group has no specified authority to direct changes across various DOD offices, and no minutes are kept of its meetings. Therefore, we were unable to determine what specific topics were discussed by the group, or the frequency, nature, or results of its efforts. Participants in this group are invited as needed, but the group generally includes representatives from the Office of Force Transformation and others from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy; Program Analysis and Evaluation; Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; and Office of Net Assessment), the Joint Staff (Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment Directorate), and the Joint Forces Command.

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### Lack of Coordinating Authority Can Hinder Development of Joint Capabilities

Concerns have been raised in several forums about the lack of adequate authority to coordinate transformation efforts. For example, the House Committee on Armed Services report on the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2005 stated that while the services have embraced transformation as an objective, the committee remained concerned that each military service has embarked on its own transformational campaign without an enforceable, integrated joint roadmap to ensure that service plans are mutually supportive and overlap where necessary.<sup>22</sup> For example, in discussing a proposed joint program office to improve interoperability among systems, the report notes that the services and the defense agencies acquire systems to meet their own requirements, not necessarily joint concepts.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> H.R. Rept. No. 108-491, pt.1, at Title X, p.355 (2004).

<sup>23</sup> H.R. Rept. No. 108-491, pt.1, at Title X, p.302 (2004).

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In addition, a June 2004 DOD Inspector General report<sup>24</sup> recommended that DOD formalize roles, responsibilities, and processes for the overall development, coordination, and oversight of DOD network-centric warfare efforts.<sup>25</sup> The report found that the lack of formalized roles and responsibilities resulted in confusion on who had decision-making authority. Further, the report states that the absence of formalized roles and processes for the overall development, coordination, and oversight of network-centric warfare efforts does not ensure that ongoing or planned initiatives are properly focused and complement each other. According to the report, DOD management agreed with the need for leadership improvements.

Likewise, we have issued several reports dealing with the challenges DOD faces in fielding joint capabilities:

- We reported in July 2004 that no single office is in charge of the Global Information Grid (a key transformation initiative intended to be the foundation for implementing all joint concepts), making it more difficult to make and enforce trade-off decisions.<sup>26</sup> Previous DOD efforts to foster interoperability have had limited success because management tools and leadership attention were not strong enough to provide sufficient oversight and overcome resistance by the military services to forgo their unique requirements in favor of requirements that would benefit DOD.
- We reported in June 2004 that one of the key factors undermining DOD's progress in implementing its capabilities-based strategy is the lack of standardized, interoperable equipment and systems in joint operations.<sup>27</sup> The report noted that although DOD recognizes improved interoperability is central to transformation, resolving this problem is difficult because military acquisition has traditionally focused on

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<sup>24</sup> Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General, *Joint Warfighting and Readiness: Management of Network Centric Warfare Within the Department of Defense*, D-2004-091 (Washington, D.C.: June 22, 2004).

<sup>25</sup> Network-centric warfare is collaborative information sharing linking sensors, decision makers, and shooters, which is intended to result in increased mission effectiveness.

<sup>26</sup> GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: The Global Information Grid and Challenges Facing Its Implementation*, [GAO-04-858](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 28, 2004).

<sup>27</sup> GAO, *Military Operations: Recent Campaigns Benefited from Improved Communications and Technology, but Barriers to Continued Progress Remain*, [GAO-04-547](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 28, 2004).

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service-specific platforms, not joint operations with interoperable equipment.

- In a March 2004 report, we recommended that DOD establish an appropriate organization to implement a strategic plan for unmanned aerial vehicles, ensuring that sufficient authority is provided to enforce the plan's direction, promote joint operations, and expend funds efficiently.<sup>28</sup>
- We reported in December 2002 that the military services and the defense agencies have been reluctant to fund acquisition of advanced concept technology-proven technologies, especially those focusing on joint requirements, because of their competing priorities.<sup>29</sup>

Likewise, a Center for Strategic and International Studies 2004 study stated that DOD continues to struggle with insufficient jointness.<sup>30</sup> Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom underscore interoperability shortcomings in equipment fielded by the services. Managing resources along service lines has not achieved real interoperability in joint command and control. The study team believes that true interoperability in joint command and control will not be achieved until it is bought jointly.

A 2003 study chartered by the Secretary of Defense stated that current processes do not optimize investment in joint capabilities to meet current and future security challenges because the services and the defense agencies define their needs at the component level and joint needs are forced into the process after each service has developed its program.<sup>31</sup> The report further states that improving interoperability is key, which requires greater coordination at the department level.

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<sup>28</sup> GAO, *Force Structure: Enhanced Strategic Planning Can Enhance DOD's UAV Efforts*, [GAO-04-342](#) (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 17, 2004).

<sup>29</sup> GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: Factors Affecting Outcomes of Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations*, [GAO-03-52](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 2, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> C.A. Murdock et al, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Mar. 2004).

<sup>31</sup> Joint Defense Capabilities Study Team, *Joint Defense Capabilities Study: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: December, 2003).

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DOD officials stated that they believe that the Director, Office of Force Transformation, has the authority he needs to be effective. The Director can persuade others to take action and influence defense guidance using results of the strategic appraisal. These officials stated that the only benefit to having directive authority is some things may happen faster than they would without this authority. DOD officials also stated that DOD has not formally established a crosscutting group responsible for implementing the transformation strategy because, in their opinion, setting up a bureaucratic layer to administer DOD's transformation strategy is not needed.

This reasoning, however, is contradictory to the advice and experiences of other organizations involved in major transformation efforts that considered clearly defined accountability and crosscutting implementation teams essential for successful transformations. It is also inconsistent with the approach taken by DOD in other cases. Without formally designating responsibility and accountability for results, choosing among competing demands for scarce resources and resolving differences in priorities between various DOD organizations may be difficult and could impede DOD's ability to transform in an efficient manner. In addition, it may be particularly difficult for DOD to sustain transformation progress when key personnel changes occur. As we discussed these points and the results of our analysis with DOD officials, they recognized that leadership and accountability for transformation results may not be clearly identified and DOD is considering what, if any, actions need to be taken to address this issue.

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## Approach to Transform Military Capabilities Lacks Important Management Tools

DOD has not fully developed critical components of a management framework to guide and monitor the results of its transformation efforts. DOD has made progress in adopting some tools—specifically, establishing a transformation strategy based on joint concepts, using mechanisms to identify and mitigate external factors, and initiating a process for reviewing roadmaps. However, it has not (1) revised its 2001 transformation goals to reflect the new joint concepts, (2) established performance goals and performance measures, (3) fully identified resources needed to achieve its goals, and (4) established a process to assess progress in achieving long-term and performance goals. Without fully utilizing these tools, it is difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which its transformation efforts are achieving the desired results, measure its overall progress, or provide transparency for how billions of dollars programmed for transformation are being applied.

Studies by several organizations, including us, have shown that successful organizations in both the public and private sectors use results-oriented management tools to help achieve desired program outcomes. These tools, or principles, embodied by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, provide agencies with a management framework for effectively implementing and managing programs and shift program management focus from measuring program activities and processes to measuring program outcomes. The framework can include various management tools, such as long-term goals, performance goals, and performance measures, which can assist agencies in measuring performance and reporting results. Table 2 lists the results-oriented management framework tools we used in our analysis.

| Table 2: Results-Oriented Management Tools Used in Our Analysis |   |
|---|---|
| Long-term goals   | Identify expected results expressed in terms of outcomes and when to expect such results              |
| Strategies to be used   | General methods the agency plans to use to accomplish long-term goals                                 |
| External factors  | Factors beyond the agency's control that could affect the agency's ability to achieve desired results |
| Performance goals   | Derived from long-term goals, should establish intended performance and focus on results required     |
| Performance measures  | Specific means of gauging performance   |
| Resources   | Identification of the resources needed to achieve each goal   |
| Evaluation plan   | An objective and formal assessment of results   |

Source: GAO guidelines.

These management tools can provide DOD and Congress ways to measure progress and determine whether initiatives are achieving their desired results. The following is our assessment of the extent to which DOD is using these tools in implementing its strategy for transforming military capabilities:

- **Long-term goals:** Long-term goals should identify expected results, should be results-oriented, and should be expressed in a way that allows them to be assessed in terms of achievement. DOD initially established six long-term goals for transformation in the 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, and it subsequently articulated transformation goals in other department documents (see table 3). According to Office of Force Transformation and OUSD Policy officials, the differences in these goals reflect evolution in DOD's vision for transformation outcomes. For example, some goals expressed in

the 2004 *National Military Strategy* are not reflected in the 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance*. Further, these goals have not been updated to reflect the joint concepts emerging from current transformation efforts. An Office of Force Transformation official said that DOD's initial goals were a good start, but they do not cover the full range of military operations that the joint concepts will cover. Although the official agreed that these goals would and should change, DOD has not begun a process to revise them.

**Table 3: DOD Transformation Goals Presented in Different Defense Guidance Documents**

|   | <i>2001 Quadrennial Defense Review and 2003 Transformation Planning Guidance</i> | <i>2004 National Military Strategy</i> | Defense Guidance |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| Protect critical bases of operations  | ■  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Project and sustain U.S. forces in distant anti-access or area-denial environments and defeat anti-access threats   | ■  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Deny enemies sanctuary through persistent surveillance, tracking and rapid engagement with high-volume precision strikes  | ■  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Operate from the commons: space, international waters and airspace, and cyberspace  |  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Strengthen intelligence   |  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Conduct network-centric operations  |  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Improve proficiency for irregular warfare   |  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Increase capabilities of partners-international and domestic  |  | ■                                      | ■                |
| Assure information systems in the face of attack and conducting effective and discriminate offensive information operations   | ■  |  |                  |
| Enhance the capability and survivability of space systems and supporting infrastructure   | ■  |  |                  |
| Leverage information technology and innovative concepts to develop an interoperable, joint communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance architecture and capability that includes a tailorable joint operational picture | ■  |  |                  |

Source: GAO analysis of DOD documents.

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- **Strategy:** A strategy should describe the general methods an agency plans to use to accomplish long-term goals. As we described in the previous section of this report, DOD has made significant progress in developing its strategy to transform military capabilities. The strategy is linked to the overall defense guidance and is based on joint concepts, and many of the strategy's components have been initiated. The strategy is also flexible and adaptable to new concepts as they are developed through experimentation.
  - **External factors:** Agencies should identify factors beyond their control that could affect their ability to achieve desired results and develop mitigation plans to address these factors. According to OUSD Policy and Office of Force Transformation officials, DOD does have mechanisms for examining and mitigating factors beyond its control that could affect the achievement of desired results. One of these mechanisms is the strategic appraisal process discussed earlier in this report. Another is DOD's Risk Management Framework, developed to ensure that current defense needs are balanced against future requirements and consider trade-offs among four risk areas—force management, operational, institutional, and future challenges (that is, transformation). According to Office of the Secretary of Defense for Program Analysis and Evaluation officials, if resource needs in one risk area increase, then resources available for other areas may decrease. For example, if demands for current operations increase, then fewer resources may be available for transformation.
  - **Performance goals:** Performance goals should establish intended performance, should be results-oriented, and should be linked to long-term goals. Since the joint roadmap is DOD's implementation plan for joint military capabilities, we looked for performance goals in the 2003 joint roadmap. In some parts of the roadmap, goals are not included at all; in others, goals are unclear, and references are made to goals presented in other documents. For example, the roadmap includes several sets of goals for joint intelligence and refers to other goals in DOD's Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Capstone Strategic Plan. As a result, it is not clear whether or how these goals support each other, how they relate to the joint concepts, or how the various programs described in this section of the roadmap will support achievement of these goals. Clearly articulated, results-oriented performance goals would help DOD explain how the myriad of programs described in the roadmap will result in the improved joint capabilities necessary to implement each joint concept.

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- **Performance measures:** Performance measures are the specific means of gauging performance and should include a baseline and target; should be objective, measurable, and quantifiable, and should include a time frame. DOD has not developed performance measures to assess progress in the following three areas: implementation of the transformation strategy across DOD; achievement of joint capabilities through the programs described in the joint roadmap; and assessment of the contribution of experimentation to transformation.

First, DOD has not developed measures to assess transformation progress across DOD. DOD reports departmentwide performance measures in its *Annual Defense Report*, and defense guidance states that DOD must develop performance measures based on joint capabilities. The Program Analysis and Evaluation Office has begun developing performance measures for DOD's balanced scorecard, which will be included in future *Annual Defense Reports*. DOD officials stated that, as part of this effort, they plan to develop measures to assess the progress of transformation DOD-wide. But to date, no such measures have been developed. Further, the few transformation measures included in the 2003 *Annual Defense Report* are process rather than results-oriented. For example, the measures for "experiment[ing] with new warfare concepts" are process-oriented, such as providing a briefing and drafting an experimentation plan.

Second, DOD has not developed measures to assess the achievement of joint capabilities through the programs described in the 2003 joint roadmap. The TPG requires the roadmaps to include performance measures to address the joint concepts, but the joint roadmap does not include performance measures and does not describe any ongoing efforts to develop them. Joint Forces Command officials stated that performance measures were not developed because the joint concepts were not drafted at the time the roadmap was prepared and that they do not expect to include performance measures until the July 2005 joint roadmap, at the earliest.

Third, DOD has not developed measures to assess the contribution of experimentation to transformation. In 2002, we recommended that the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, develop strategic planning tools to use in managing and periodically assessing the progress of joint



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experimentation.<sup>32</sup> At that time, a Joint Forces Command official stated that the Command was developing such measures. DOD agreed with this recommendation and stated that subsequent guidance would address this issue. Although the Joint Forces Command has drafted measures to assess the contribution of experimentation to transformation, as of September 2004 it had not approved or implemented these measures.

- **Resources:** Agencies should identify the resources needed to achieve each goal and should provide a rationale for how these resources will contribute to achieving the expected level of performance. The TPG also requires the roadmaps to include the funding necessary to develop the desired capabilities. However, we found that DOD has not clearly linked resources—either throughout the department or in the joint roadmap—with the development of capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts.

For example, the 2003 *Annual Defense Report* stated that DOD is committed to making budget documents more transparent by clearly aligning dollars to specific programs so that senior-level decision makers can see directly how they support the defense strategy. This report showed \$263 billion (for fiscal years 2004-2009) for transformation; however, it is difficult to independently verify how much DOD plans to spend on transformation—we reported in May 2004 that DOD's *Future Years Defense Program* does not clearly identify those programs DOD considers transformational. Further, the *Annual Defense Report* did not fully reflect all the programs planned to develop the capabilities needed for each joint concept. Likewise, the joint roadmap did not provide a complete description of the programs and resources needed to develop the desired capabilities. For example, the roadmap states that the Global Information Grid will require changes in doctrine, organizational processes, cultures, and behaviors, but it does not explain what changes are needed or the funding required for these changes.

- **Evaluation and corrective action plan:** An evaluation plan is an objective and formal assessment of the results of a major effort; a corrective action plan should describe how evaluation findings will be used to improve performance or revise unmet goals. As previously discussed, the strategic appraisal process is designed to provide DOD

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<sup>32</sup> GAO, *Military Transformation: Actions Needed to Better Manage DOD's Joint Experimentation Program*, [GAO-02-856](#) (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 29, 2002).

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with a mechanism for evaluating its transformation efforts and identifying corrective actions. It calls for the use of evaluation findings to improve performance and identify or implement needed actions. According to Office of Force Transformation and OUSD Policy officials, any shortfalls identified during the appraisal are corrected in one of two ways—either by incorporating required actions into directive defense guidance issued by the Office of the Secretary of Defense or by providing informal guidance to the Joint Forces Command and the services regarding issues to be addressed in the next roadmap iterations. In fiscal year 2004, the first year a strategic appraisal was conducted, DOD reviewed each roadmap prepared by the military departments and the Joint Forces Command to determine if any significant gaps existed in the capabilities being acquired. The assessment did not evaluate the progress achieved in acquiring the capabilities needed to implement the joint concepts because the concepts were still undefined and under development. In lieu of the joint concepts, the first strategic appraisal used lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Secretary of Defense's Top Ten priorities as criteria to identify these capability gaps. In reviewing information on the strategic appraisal's results, it was not clear what measures were used in evaluating how well the roadmaps were addressing these gaps. The strategic appraisal could attain more definitive results and more clearly identify actions that need to be taken if future assessments are based on clearly articulated goals and measures founded on the joint concepts.

When we discussed the weaknesses in the current framework guiding the transformation effort, DOD officials explained that DOD's transformation strategy is new and that many parts are being developed simultaneously and continuously evolving. For example, the transformation strategy calls for the joint roadmap to be based on the joint concepts, but both are being developed at the same time. As the concepts mature, DOD officials expect future versions of the roadmaps will explain in more detail how capabilities will be developed to implement the concepts. DOD officials also stated that the annual strategic appraisal is designed to identify capability gaps that future roadmaps or defense guidance will address. In their view, this process is equivalent to setting goals and measures. Regarding directly linking resource requirements to long-term and performance goals, the officials stated that the department allocates resources in its budget process and did not address how these resources link to long-term or performance goals.

Although we agree that the concurrent nature of the transformation strategy has required many components to be developed simultaneously,

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we do not believe that this precludes the development of results-oriented management tools that can help the department manage this effort and achieve the desired results. For example, DOD has made progress in developing the joint concepts, and although they all are not fully developed, they can still provide a basis for establishing long-term goals, performance goals, and performance measures. As the concepts mature through experimentation, DOD can periodically revise the management tools to reflect these changes, possibly as part of the annual strategic appraisal process. Without taking the steps to establish clear and consistent long-term goals that are grounded in the joint concepts, the department's transformation efforts may not fully support the desired outcomes. Likewise, the absence of performance goals and performance measures limits the department's ability to measure progress toward achieving its goals. Finally, without a clear link between resource requirements and transformation goals, it is unclear what resources will be required to achieve transformation, when the funds will be required, or how billions of dollars programmed for transformation are being applied.

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## Conclusions

The complexity, magnitude, and importance of transforming military capabilities demand that an effective, results-oriented management framework be established to guide DOD-wide transformation efforts and monitor the billions of dollars that will be invested to achieve transformation goals. This framework should include clear leadership and accountability for achieving results, as well as management tools to guide activities and measure outcomes. As discussed in this report, DOD has taken significant, positive steps toward establishing this framework. The Secretary of Defense has provided a transformation vision and instituted some important elements of a results-oriented management framework. For example, the overall strategy provides flexibility to adapt to new joint operating concepts. Also, planned annual updates to each service's roadmap are intended to detail how new capabilities may be acquired, and the annual strategic appraisal is a mechanism to primarily assess the transformation plans in the roadmaps. These positive steps were taken in a relatively short period of time and they reflect the dedication of department personnel to transform military capabilities and achieve the vision set by the Secretary of Defense.

These steps also establish a foundation for DOD to take additional actions that can enhance its transformation strategy and develop a more comprehensive, results-oriented framework to guide its efforts and achieve intended results. Specifically, the overall accountability and authority for achieving transformation goals are unclear, and the existing

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working group created to help integrate the multitude of transformation efforts underway is informal, having no official charter and no directive authority, and meets on an irregular basis. These weaknesses can limit DOD's ability to promote an integrated approach to transformation, choose between competing priorities, and institutionalize a transformation process that will endure over time. In addition, the lack of a comprehensive set of results-oriented management tools that reflect the joint concepts under development limits DOD's ability to manage this complex process with a focus on results and clouds the visibility over the significant resources that have been expended and will be required to transform military capabilities. These factors may ultimately impede progress toward achieving the overarching transformation goal—maintaining the preeminence of U.S. military capabilities and the ability of U.S. forces to defeat all future threats—and the department may have difficulty in garnering congressional support for transformation efforts unless it adopts a stronger and more result-oriented management approach.

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## Recommendations for Executive Action

To clarify the accountability for achieving the transformation of military capabilities and to establish a mechanism to integrate the transformation efforts using results-oriented management tools, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense take the following two actions:

- Assign clear leadership and accountability for achieving the transformation of military capabilities.
- Establish a formal crosscutting transformation group, assign it with the responsibility for overseeing and integrating DOD's strategy, provide it with the necessary authority to perform their responsibilities effectively, and hold it accountable for results. The group should:
  - Include representatives from the key offices deemed necessary for successful implementation.
  - Have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
  - Articulate and periodically revise long-term goals for the transformation of military capabilities that reflect the joint concepts. These long-term goals should identify what transformation results are to be expected and when to expect these results.
  - Clearly identify the resources that DOD estimates it will need to achieve each long-term goal.
  - Use the goals and measures as a foundation for the annual assessment of transformation progress.

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- Prepare an annual report to Congress on the progress in achieving transformation goals, including actions taken and outcomes achieved, resources expended and programmed, measures used to assess progress achieved, and actions planned to meet or revise unmet goals.

To further develop results-oriented management tools that can guide DOD's transformation of joint military capabilities, measure progress, and determine whether initiatives are achieving their desired results, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense take the following action:

- direct the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, to direct the Commander, Joint Forces Command, to include in future updates to the Joint Transformation Roadmap:
  - a discussion of how the capabilities being developed will link with and support accomplishment of the long-term goals;
  - results-oriented performance goals linked to long-term goals, which also reflect the joint concepts and gaps in current capabilities, that establish intended performance, focus on outcomes or results expected or required, and establish target dates for the achievement of these results;
  - performance measures based on the performance goals to assess progress; and
  - resources required (for nonmateriel as well as materiel efforts) to obtain capabilities for each joint concept and linkage of resources with each performance goal.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We requested DOD to provide written comments on a draft of this report. However, DOD's Office of Force Transformation provided oral comments. In official oral comments, DOD officials generally disagreed with our recommendations. First, pertaining to our recommendation that the Secretary of Defense assign clear leadership and accountability for achieving the transformation of military capabilities, DOD stated that the Secretary of Defense already provides clear leadership for transformation within DOD, the services play a key role in implementing the Secretary's priorities, and their roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated in the *Transformation Planning Guidance*. DOD also stated that the transformation roadmaps and the strategic appraisal process are used to assess transformation progress and inform the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution system.

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We agree that the Secretary of Defense has provided overall leadership and a vision for the transformation of military capabilities, and have highlighted this in our report, but as we also point out, the day-to-day demands placed on the Secretary make it difficult for him to personally maintain the oversight, focus, and momentum needed to sustain transformation efforts. In addition, currently no individual has clear accountability, such as the Deputy Secretary or another senior official, to achieve transformation results, and the strategic appraisal process has not provided an overall evaluation of the progress achieved in acquiring transformational capabilities. Rather, the appraisal process has primarily focused on identifying potential gaps in the capabilities being acquired by each service. Accordingly, we still believe the recommendation to assign clear leadership and accountability for transformation results is a critical step needed to achieve the transformation of military capabilities.

Second, in commenting on our recommendation to establish a formal crosscutting transformation group, assign it the responsibility for overseeing and integrating DOD's strategy, and hold it accountable for results, DOD stated that this recommendation would result in a parallel and overlapping structure that would compete with the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution system. DOD also stated that our recommended crosscutting group would represent another bureaucratic layer and lines of authority would not become clearer, but would rather compete for preeminence within DOD. In regard to our recommendation that this group also prepare an annual report to Congress on the progress made in achieving transformation goals, DOD pointed out that DOD's *Annual Defense Report* includes the current progress of transformation.

We disagree that the establishment of a formal crosscutting group would compete with the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution system, or that it would confuse the lines of authority. Therefore, we believe our recommendation is still warranted. As highlighted in this report, DOD has chosen to appoint crosscutting implementation teams for other transformation efforts, the Joint Forces Command has recognized the need to better coordinate and integrate transformation efforts, and the advice and experience of other organizations in other government agencies and in the private sector argue that crosscutting integration teams are essential for successful transformation efforts. Moreover, in the absence of such a group, DOD has no routine vehicle for maintaining a continued focus on transformation goals set by the Secretary, nor a mechanism for resolving implementation issues that may arise. With regard to the *Annual Defense Report* serving as a vehicle to report on the results of transformation efforts, while we recognize that DOD has begun

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to develop transformation performance measures that are intended to be included in future *Annual Defense Reports*, to date, these measures have not been fully developed, and the few measures included in the 2003 *Annual Defense Report* are process, rather than results-oriented. Therefore, we continue to believe that an additional reporting mechanism that describes the resources devoted to transformation efforts and outcomes achieved is needed. Such a reporting mechanism could help Congress determine whether the billions of dollars being applied to transform military capabilities are providing an adequate return on investment in light of the significant long-term affordability challenges that DOD faces.

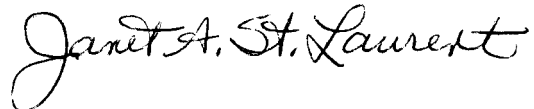
Third, in commenting on our recommendation that future updates to the *Joint Transformation Roadmap* include specific results-oriented tools, DOD stated that a combination of the existing strategic appraisal process, joint concepts, service transformation roadmaps, Joint Transformation Roadmap, and service, combatant command, Joint Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense inputs to the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution system provide the results-oriented management tools we recommended. We disagree with DOD's comments on this point, because, as we discuss in this report, even when viewed collectively, these separate elements still lack clearly defined goals linked to the joint concepts, specific resource requirements to meet the goals, and performance measures to evaluate the outcomes of the initiatives. Moreover, DOD's comments did not specifically address the need for improvements to the Joint Transformation Roadmap. We continue to believe our recommendation is needed because of the deficiencies in the joint roadmap we discuss in this report, which were also recognized by DOD officials as we conducted our review.

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We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of Defense, Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy), and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

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Should you or your staff have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4402 or my Assistant Director, Robert L. Repasky, at (202) 512-9868. Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix III.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet A. St. Laurent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

Janet St. Laurent, Director  
Defense Capabilities and Management



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# Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

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To describe the Department of Defense's (DOD) strategy to transform joint military capabilities, we reviewed the April 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance* and discussed the tasks and time frames it established with officials from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD Policy), the Office of Force Transformation, the Joint Staff, and the Joint Forces Command. To describe the concept development process, we reviewed the July 2004 *Joint Concept Development and Revision Plan* and discussed the process with Joint Staff and Joint Forces Command officials with responsibilities in that process. To determine how the joint experimentation process fits into the strategy, we reviewed the January 2004 *Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Campaign Plan* and discussed its relationship to transformation with officials from the Office of Force Transformation, OUSD Policy, the Joint Forces Command, and the Joint Staff. We discussed the role of the joint and service transformation roadmaps in the transformation strategy with officials from the Joint Staff, the Joint Forces Command, and the Office of Force Transformation. We documented the strategic appraisal process and discussed it with officials from OUSD Policy and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director for Program Analysis and Evaluation, and the Office of Force Transformation. To determine how the transformation strategy links to the acquisition process, we reviewed relevant DOD instructions governing these processes and discussed them with officials from the Office of Force Transformation, OUSD Policy, the Joint Staff, and the Joint Forces Command.

To assess the extent to which DOD has clearly established leadership, accountability for achieving transformation results, and a mechanism to integrate transformation efforts, we examined DOD instructions governing the roles and responsibilities of the various defense organizations outlined in the April 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance* (TPG) and assessed whether the TPG clearly designated responsibility for implementing the transformation strategy or merely parts of the strategy. We also gathered and reviewed relevant policy guidance, instructions, and documents related to the transformation strategy, including the 2003 *Joint Transformation Roadmap* issued in January 2004, the July 2004 *Joint Concept Development Revision Plan*, the draft directive for the Director of Force Transformation, and the January 2004 *Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Campaign Plan*. We identified how DOD has implemented similar large, crosscutting efforts such as training transformation and studied DOD reports that recognized the importance of clearly designating an entity responsible and accountable for transformation efforts and that recommended that crosscutting groups be established to successfully implement these efforts. We also reviewed

various reports that raised concerns about the lack of adequate authority to coordinate programs DOD-wide issued by the House Committee on Armed Services, us, DOD, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Next, we compared this information to selected key practices consistently found to be at the center of successful mergers and organizational transformations. These selected key practices were ensuring that top leadership drives the transformation and dedicating an implementation team to manage the transformation process. We discussed the results, with officials from OUSD Policy, the Office of Force Transformation, the Joint Staff, and the Joint Forces Command responsible for implementing parts of the strategy.

To assess the extent to which DOD is using results-oriented management tools in implementing its transformation strategy, we compared these tools with the management principles embodied in the Government Results and Performance Act of 1993 and further refined in the act's user guides and our prior reports. After assessing the management tools and reviewing our related guidelines, we discussed with DOD officials the management tools that were relevant to the transformation strategy. To assess whether DOD was using each management tool, we used relevant questions derived from our guidelines in analyzing pertinent documents such as the April 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance*, the 2003 *Joint Transformation Roadmap* issued in January 2004, and the January 2004 *Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Campaign Plan*. We did not assess the extent to which each service's roadmap incorporated these management tools. We also discussed our results with appropriate DOD officials including the Office of Force Transformation, Joint Forces Command, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director for Program, Analysis and Evaluation, and OUSD Policy. Finally, to identify DOD estimates for transformation costs DOD-wide and costs for the joint capabilities described in the 2003 *Joint Transformation Roadmap*, we obtained cost estimates from official DOD reports. We assessed the reliability of the data by corroborating the data with knowledgeable agency officials and determined the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

Organizations Visited for this Assignment:

**Office of the Secretary of Defense**

- Office of Force Transformation
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

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- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics
  - Director for Program Analysis and Evaluation

**Joint Chiefs of Staff**

- Joint Transformation Division, Operational Plans and Joint Force Development, J-7
- Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment Directorate, J-8

**Joint Forces Command**

- Joint Experimentation Directorate, J-9
- Joint Requirements and Integration and Division, J-8
- Office of Prototype Oversight, Joint Training Directorate and Joint Warfighting Center, J-7
- Strategy and Analysis Directorate, J-5

We conducted our review from May 2003 through October 2004 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

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# Appendix II: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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## GAO Contact

Robert L. Repasky (202) 512-9868

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## Acknowledgments

In addition to those named above, Brenda Waterfield, John Beauchamp, Dawn Godfrey, Mary Jo LaCasse, Sarah E. Veale, Elizabeth H. Curda, Cheryl A. Weissman, and David A. Mayfield made key contributions to this report.

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*Results-Oriented Government: GPRA Has Established a Solid Foundation for Achieving Greater Results.* [GAO-04-38](#). Washington, D.C.: March 10, 2004.

*Military Transformation: Fielding of Army's Stryker Vehicles Is Well Under Way, but Expectations for Their Transportability by C-130 Aircraft Need to Be Clarified.* [GAO-04-925](#). Washington, D.C.: August 12, 2004.

*Defense Acquisitions: The Global Information Grid and Challenges Facing Its Implementation.* [GAO-04-858](#). Washington, D.C.: July 28, 2004.

*Military Operations: Recent Campaigns Benefited from Improved Communications and Technology, but Barriers to Continued Progress Remain.* [GAO-04-547](#). Washington, D.C.: June 28, 2004.

*Future Years Defense Program: Actions Needed to Improve Transparency of DOD's Projected Resource Needs.* [GAO-04-514](#). Washington, D.C.: May 7, 2004.

*Department of Defense: Further Actions Needed to Establish and Implement a Framework for Successful Financial and Business Management Transformation.* [GAO-04-551T](#). Washington, D.C.: March 23, 2004.

*Force Structure: Improved Strategic Planning Can Enhance DOD's Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Efforts.* [GAO-04-342](#). Washington, D.C.: March 17, 2004.

*Military Transformation: The Army and OSD Met Legislative Requirements for First Stryker Brigade Design Evaluation, but Issues Remain for Future Brigades.* [GAO-04-188](#). Washington, D.C.: December 12, 2003.

*Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations.* [GAO-03-669](#). Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003.

*Military Transformation: Realistic Deployment Timelines Needed for Army Stryker Brigades.* [GAO-03-801](#). Washington, D.C.: June 30, 2003.

*Major Management Challenges and Program Risks: Department of Defense.* [GAO-03-98](#). Washington, D.C.: January 2003.

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*Major Management Challenges and Program Risks: A Governmentwide Perspective.* [GAO-03-95](#). Washington, D.C.: January 2003.

*Military Personnel: Oversight Process Needed to Help Maintain Momentum of DOD's Strategic Human Capital Planning.* [GAO-03-237](#). Washington, D.C.: December 5, 2002.

*Defense Acquisitions: Factors Affecting Outcomes of Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations.* [GAO-03-52](#). Washington, D.C.: December 2, 2002.

*Quadrennial Defense Review: Future Reviews Can Benefit from Better Analysis and Changes in Timing and Scope.* [GAO-03-13](#). Washington, D.C.: November 4, 2002.

*Military Transformation: Actions Needed to Better Manage DOD's Joint Experimentation Program.* [GAO-02-856](#). Washington, D.C.: August 29, 2002.

*Military Transformation: Army Actions Needed to Enhance Formation of Future Interim Brigade Combat Teams.* [GAO-02-442](#). Washington, D.C.: May 17, 2002.

*Military Transformation: Army Has a Comprehensive Plan for Managing Its Transformation but Faces Major Challenges.* [GAO-02-96](#). Washington, D.C.: November 16, 2001.

*Military Transformation: Navy Efforts Should Be More Integrated and Focused.* [GAO-01-853](#). Washington, D.C.: August 2, 2001.

*Defense Acquisition: Army Transformation Faces Weapon Systems Challenges.* [GAO-01-311](#). Washington, D.C.: May 21, 2001.

*The Results Act: An Evaluator's Guide to Assessing Agency Annual Performance Plans.* [GAO/GGD-10.1.20](#). Washington, D.C.: April 1, 1998.

*Agencies' Strategic Plans Under GPRA: Key Questions to Facilitate Congressional Review (Version 1).* [GAO/GGD-10.1.16](#). Washington, D.C.: May 1, 1997.

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